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OLC 75-0198

29 January 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of Norvill Jones and Richard Moose, Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff, re Aid to North Vietnam

25X1A 1. Accompanied [] NIO/SEA, to a briefing on aid to North Vietnam, requested by Norvill Jones, Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff. Richard Moose of the Committee staff sat in.

25X1A 2. [] gave a very comprehensive briefing on evidence including underlining methodology and gaps in collection.

3. In response to Jones' request, [] explained that a paper representing a community-wide effort would be available at the beginning of the week after next, explaining the problem in applying value to the aid because finalized economic statistics would not be available until March.

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4. The high quality of our economic aid information was contrasted with the less than satisfactory coverage of military aid and the staffers were cautioned on the sensitivity of the sources involved.

5. In dealing with the net assessment problem, [] proposed one alternative which would involve DOD backing out 45% of U.S. aid to South Vietnam in order to achieve a more realistic comparison with aid to North Vietnam. The differences between the two countries' military missions, self-sufficiency, and sophistication of weapons were also stressed.

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6. Moose clearly is interested in challenging what he views as Ambassador Martin's gross exaggeration of North Vietnamese aid and concerned about possible pressure on the Agency to maximize figures. Christison did not agree with this assessment and explained that unclassified bottom line figures without the classified caveats on collection, methodology, and reliance on hard but incomplete evidence would paint a distorted picture. Moose and Jones conceded the points but still pushed for figures from the Agency which could be used publicly in the upcoming debates and specifically requested such a paper with such caveats as we felt necessary.

7. Miscellaneous.

a. There was a fair amount of discussion on Cambodia and Jones said that while he and Mansfield were in the PRC, a reliable source told them that North Vietnam extracted a duty of 80% of PRC aid to the Khmer Republic. (It was apparent that we do not have good information of North Vietnamese aid to Cambodia. If the restrictions imposed upon Agency activities in Cambodia is a proximate cause, perhaps we should get this word to Jones and possibly through him to Mansfield.)

b. Moose questioned whether the North Vietnamese could really be importing one million tons of rice as indicated by [REDACTED] explained and they acknowledged that the rice harvest in North Vietnam was exceedingly poor.

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c. Moose picked up a discrepancy in the 1973 prices of aid which was off some by two-fifths but [REDACTED] explained that it is not unusual for analysts to adjust and refine figures and postulated that the discrepancy may have been due to the fact that the applicable price statistics were not available at the time the earlier projection was made.

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6. Follow-Up Actions.

a. Classified paper on aid to North Vietnam no later than 12 February 1975 and preferably on the 10th or 11th. Action --

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b. Unclassified paper, action to be taken and/or still to be determined --

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c. Restraints on Agency activities in Cambodia substantial impairment to Agency collection of assistance data? Action -- Mr. [redacted] in conjunction with DDO, depending upon their finding, to recommend course of action to the Director through OLC.

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Deputy Legislative Counsel

Distribution:

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